

Agency 315

Department of Services for the Blind**Recommendation Summary**

Dollars in Thousands

	Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
2003-05 Expenditure Authority	67.6	3,554	16,236	19,790
Total Maintenance Level	67.6	3,719	16,772	20,491
Difference		165	536	701
Percent Change from Current Biennium	0.0%	4.6%	3.3%	3.5%
Performance Changes				
Caseworker Ratio and Service Costs	.5	76	284	360
Middle Management Reduction	(.8)	(20)	(68)	(88)
General Inflation		(9)	(46)	(55)
Subtotal	(0.3)	47	170	217
Total Proposed Budget	67.3	3,766	16,942	20,708
Difference	(.3)	212	706	918
Percent Change from Current Biennium	(0.4)%	6.0%	4.3%	4.6%
Total Proposed Budget by Activity				
Agency Management and Administrative Support Services	7.5	555	1,986	2,541
Child and Family Program	3.9		346	346
Deaf-Blind Service Center		464		464
Food Service Operations in State Buildings	2.5		1,702	1,702
Independent Living	3.3	626	952	1,578
Telephonic Reading Services			80	80
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services	50.9	2,093	11,752	13,845
Compensation Cost Adjustment		48	192	240
Middle Management Reduction	(.8)	(20)	(68)	(88)
Total Proposed Budget	67.3	3,766	16,942	20,708

PERFORMANCE LEVEL CHANGE DESCRIPTIONS**Caseworker Ratio and Service Costs**

In order to provide federally mandated services leading to competitive employment outcomes for a steadily growing severely disabled caseload, the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) will increase direct service delivery in the vocational rehabilitation program by adding one vocational rehabilitation counselor in Fiscal Year 2007. DSB will also increase case service expenditures to support this workload growth and avoid an order of selection status. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal)

Middle Management Reduction

The Governor has directed that middle management be reduced by 1,000 positions by the end of the biennium. This item is this agency's share of the statewide amount.

HUMAN SERVICES - OTHER

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

Agency Management and Administrative Support Services

Staff provides administrative support and management for the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB). Their functions include budget and accounting, personnel, training, and information technology. Support for the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind is also included in this activity. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal)

Child and Family Program

The Child and Family program provides consultation services to families of approximately 700 blind children (birth to age 14) and to the organizations that serve them, such as preschools and schools. The program provides support, advice, and information to families, teachers, and others about training, educational programs, and resources unique to the developmental needs of blind children. (General Fund- Federal, General Fund-Private/Local).

Deaf-Blind Service Center

Funding designated for the Deaf-Blind Service Center, including funds transferred from the Department of Social and Health Services, are administered by DSB. The purpose of this center is to facilitate the effective access of deaf-blind individuals and their families to programs and services that meet their independent living and vocational rehabilitation needs. The center offers a single, central entry point in the greater Puget Sound area, allowing them to locate and receive a coordinated set of services, with emphases on services that lead to competitive employment of deaf-blind individuals in integrated settings, and coordinated services for deaf-blind individuals with developmental disabilities.

Food Service Operations in State Buildings

Both federal and state law give first priority to qualified, legally blind persons for the opportunity to operate food facilities in publicly-owned buildings. The Vending Facility Program is a federal program funded entirely by revenues received from vending machines in state and federal buildings (\$900,000 annually). The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) trains and licenses legally blind people to manage snack/gift shops, espresso stands, and food service facilities in government buildings. BEP provides ongoing management assistance and essential food service equipment, and establishes new facilities as opportunities arise. (Business Enterprises Revolving Account-Nonappropriated)

Independent Living

The Independent Living program teaches recently blinded Washingtonians how to continue living in their homes after vision loss. Assigned to designated counties, contractors visit individuals' homes to provide low-cost devices and instruction in blindness techniques, including how to care for self and home, walking with the use of a cane, and how to continue to read and write. While 80,000 people are potentially eligible for these services, the program currently serves 1,700 individuals, most who are age 70 and over. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal)

Telephonic Reading Services

Telephonic Reading Services provides reading services to blind individuals through the use of phone lines. The service is operated by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) in Baltimore, Maryland. This service is mandated by RCW 74.18.045, based on legislation enacted in 2003. (Business Enterprises Revolving Account-Nonappropriated)

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services

The Vocational Rehabilitation program (VR) enables individuals who are blind or visually impaired to become competitively employed by developing their skills, independence, and self-confidence. Federal law mandates that VR provide comprehensive and individualized services to meet each participant's needs and to support each Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Services include vocational counseling; assistive technology assessment and training; training of adaptive skills of blindness and adult basic skills; transition services; assistance with small business development; mental health counseling; transportation; assistance with job search, development, and placement; workplace accommodations; and employer follow-up.

Compensation Cost Adjustment

This item reflects proposed compensation and benefit cost adjustments that were not allocated to individual agency activities. The agency will assign these costs to the proper activities after the budget is enacted.

Middle Management Reduction

The Governor has directed that middle management be reduced by 1,000 positions by the end of the biennium. This item is this agency's share of the statewide amount. These savings will be assigned to the appropriate activities after the budget is enacted.